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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Board of Education to Review Applications for Washington's First "Innovative Schools"

Olympia, WA – The Washington State Board of Education's February 23 meeting at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction in Olympia, Washington will include a review of two schools' applications for Innovation Waivers, the first to be granted in Washington State.

Stewart Middle School (Tacoma) and Odyssey High School (Highline) will be considered by the State Board for Innovation Waivers this year.

Innovation Waivers stem from 2011 Legislation (E2SHB 1546) creating "Innovation Schools and Zones." Innovation Schools, or groups of schools (Zones), are partly defined by their intention to implement innovative models of instruction focused on the arts, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

An Innovative School or Zone is also eligible to apply to the State Board of Education for an Innovation Waiver, which would empower schools to operate on a schedule different than the standard 180-day school year. Waivers for Innovative Schools/Zones may only be denied if SBE finds that implementing the waiver will likely result in decreased student achievement.

Materials related to the February Board meeting and the meeting agenda are available at www.sbe.wa.gov.

The Board meeting will begin Thursday, February 23, at 10:00 a.m.

The public and news media are invited to attend.

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About the State Board of Education: The State Board of Education provides advocacy and strategic oversight of public education. The Board is comprised of 16 members: five are elected by school board directors, seven are appointed by the Governor, two serve as student representatives, and one serves as a private school representative. The Superintendent of Public Instruction is also a member. The Board's recent work includes the approval of a new career and college-ready graduation requirements framework and developing the first Washington state intervention policy into our persistently lowest-achieving schools.